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# Farm Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture Office of Public Affairs Radio-TV Division Washington, D.C. 20250 (202) 720-4330

Letter No. 2583

November 6, 1992

**PILOT PROGRAM FOR OPTIONS CONTRACTS** -- Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan announced that counties in Illinois, Indiana, and Iowa will be eligible to participate in the Options Pilot Program, a program to provide federal support for commodities by purchasing options contracts for 1993 crops. "This program is being offered as an introduction for producers to use options contracts for income and price support," Madigan said. "Farmers will achieve protection equivalent to the target price and price support levels for commodities they produce, and use the market system to do it." The Illinois counties are Champaign, Logan and Shelby; in Indiana, Carroll, Clinton and Tippecanoe; and in Iowa, Boone, Grundy and Hardin. USDA's Extension Service will hold sessions in selected counties to explain the pilot program to interested farmers. Contact: Roger Runningen (202) 720-4623.

**LOANS FOR FARM STORED CORN** -- Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan announced two programs to provide recourse loans to corn producers who have certain grades of corn that are ineligible for the regular loan programs. Corn that is low-test weight or that has been cracked, rolled or crimped are eligible for recourse loans. Producers should contact their county Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service office for more information. Contact: Roger Runningen (202) 720-4623.

**TREE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM** -- Deputy Secretary of Agriculture Ann M. Veneman announced that USDA has allocated \$48 million toward a Tree Assistance Program to aid owners of trees or nursery plants which were lost or substantially damaged due to hurricanes and certain other natural disasters. Eligible commercial crops include nursery plants, orchard trees and forest seedlings to produce timber, pulp, or Christmas trees. Additional assistance is available to owners of orchard trees which were lost in 1990, 1991 and 1992 due to freeze or earthquake. Assistance will also be available to owners of forest tree seedlings that were lost in 1990, 1991 and 1992 to drought or earthquake. County Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS) offices will be taking applications through February 12, 1993. Owners should contact their county ASCS office for further information. Contact: Roger Runningen (202) 720-4623.

**USDA RESEARCHERS WORK WITH FOREIGN COUNTERPARTS** -- Scientists with USDA's Agricultural Research Service will work jointly with scientists in Russia and Ukraine on projects that range from preserving genetically valuable plants to seeking natural enemies of crop pests. The agreements are part of a new international research initiative that ARS has launched to emphasize improved cooperation that will lead to added benefits for American farmers and consumers. USDA is hoping that the increased international research cooperation will lead to new markets for American farmers, new products from farm commodities and advances in saving soil and protecting water quality. Contact: Sean Adams (301) 504-9108.

**USDA PROPOSES EASE ON BIOTECHNOLOGY** -- Biotechnology is the quick, safe and precise transfer of specific genetic information from one plant or microorganism to create desirable end results in another. USDA is looking to ease the steps needed to field-test plants developed through biotechnology. The proposed system will reduce approval time for projects, cut costs, encourage biotechnology innovations and focus USDA regulatory resources on the areas of greatest complexity. USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service has been regulating research and permits. One extensively tested plant, the Flavr Savr tomato, has recently been approved by APHIS without further regulation or restriction. USDA is conducting a petition process to determine the acceptance of its new proposal. Contact: Cynthia Eck (301) 436-5931.

**LABELING FOR SHELL EGGS** -- USDA is proposing temperature and labeling requirements for shell eggs. The regulation would require shell eggs be stored at forty-five degrees fahrenheit or below after packing and that they be transported in refrigerated trucks at the same temperature range. The proposed regulations also contain egg carton labeling requirements that would advise consumers of the need to refrigerate eggs until they are prepared for consumption. USDA is aiming to remind egg consumers that eggs must be refrigerated like other raw animal foods. Refrigeration is an important factor in reducing outbreaks of human salmonellosis. Contact: Becky Unkenholz (202) 720-8998.

**KEEP PEACH TREES FROM FREEZING** -- Scientists with USDA's Agricultural Research Service have isolated a gene that appears to help peach trees defend themselves against damaging freezes. Scientists found the gene in Mexico's evergreen peach trees, which don't experience dormancy, the time when deciduous trees lose their leaves and stop growing. The scientists bred the peach trees with the gene from the Mexican peach trees, and they have been growing in test orchards since 1986. The harvested peaches from the trees have a white flesh and very little red color in the skin. Scientists explained that even though fruit trees prepare themselves for seasonal changes, a sudden freeze or harsh winter can damage and kill trees, causing economic disaster for fruit growers. Scientists hope that this newly discovered gene can help reduce the risk of peach trees to extreme freezes. Contact: Doris Stanley (301) 504-8767.

**U.S. STRAWBERRY EXPORTS INCREASE** -- In fiscal 1991, U.S. berry exports reached \$130 million, making the U.S. the world's second largest exporter of berries behind the European Community (EC). The primary market for U.S. fresh strawberries is Canada, which purchased 69 percent of U.S. exports in 1991, followed by Japan and the EC. California produces over three-fourths of the strawberry crop, while Florida produces around nine percent. Strawberry producers see an opening in the market coming from Mexico, whose demand has increased significantly in the past two years. Contact: Robert Tse (202) 720-1034.

**PUBLICATION AVAILABILITY** -- USDA's Agricultural Review Service has published its Family Economics Review for the third quarter of 1992. A limited number of free copies are available. Media only, please. Contact: Carol Childers (202) 720-4330.

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## FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

**AGRICULTURE USA # 1848** -- On this edition, Gary Crawford reports Americans are discovering a new world of specialty and gourmet coffees. (Weekly reel -- 13-1/2 minute documentary.)

**CONSUMER TIME # 1330** -- More food aid needed in Africa; plant reproduction in space; the right bush for the right place; turkey bargains and taking the fat out of peanuts. (Weekly reel of 2-1/2 to 3 minute consumer features.)

**AGRITAPE NEWS & FEATURES #1839** -- USDA news highlights; turkey troubles; cooperative ag research; tree assistance program and additional corn loans. (Weekly reel of news features.)

**NEWS FEATURE FIVE #1545** -- New listeria test; tranquilizer herbicide; perfume compound kills fungi; stopping potato late blight; and bio-bonanza. (Weekly reel of research feature stories.)

**UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE** -- Monday, November 16, livestock outlook and milk production; Tuesday, November 17, crop/weather update, farm labor; Wednesday, November 18, fruit outlook; Thursday, November 19, ag outlook; Friday, November 20, wheat outlook, livestock/poultry update, and cattle on feed. These are the USDA reports we know about in advance. Our Newsline carries many stories every day which are not listed in this lineup. Please don't let the lack of a story listing keep you from calling.

**DIAL THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINE (202) 488-8358 or 8359.**

Material changed at 5 p.m., ET, each working day.

## FROM OUR TELEVISION NEWS SERVICE

**FEATURES** -- Pat O'Leary reports on portraits in agriculture; Lynn Wyvill reports on no calorie sugar, and Will Pemble reports on research to develop a livestock sperm sorting system.

**ACTUALITIES** -- USDA meteorologist Norton Strommen reports on weather and crops; Steve Reed takes a look at livestock and poultry outlook, and Janet Livezey reports on rice outlook.

**UPCOMING FEATURES** -- Deboria Janifer reports on Louisiana sugarcane research; Pat O'Leary reports on USDA's outlook conference, and Lynn Wyvill reports on turkey safety.

**EVERY OTHER WEEK** -- Agriculture Update, five minutes of USDA farm program information in "news desk" format with B-roll.

*Available on Satellite Galaxy 6, channel 23, audio 6.2 or 6.8, downlink frequency 4160 MHz.: Thursdays from 7:30 - 7:45 p.m., ET, Saturdays from 10 - 10:30 a.m., ET, and Mondays from 8 - 8:30 a.m., ET.*

## OFFMIKE

**PRIVATE ENTERPRISE**...in Poland is further advanced than in many Eastern European nations, says **Ed Slusarczyk** (Ag Radio Network, Utica, NY), but many farms do not yet use it. Those that do are performing well. Ed says he has made many contacts in Poland during his 14 trips to the nation. Farm broadcasters do more than transmit the news, occasionally they are the news. Congratulations to Ed. He served as master of ceremonies at the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts in New York City on October 23 for the Jan Lewan Polka Orchestra. Ed says he and the polka people were backed by the 65-piece New York Symphony and had a grand time.

**BUMPER HARVEST**...was performed mostly with existing equipment, says **Curt Shoemaker** (KFRM, Hutchinson, KS). Sales of new equipment are down, reflecting decisions to postpone purchases for another year. Curt says what producers need now is prices that match their harvest.

**MOVED**...Alan Teel (KJJJC, Osceola, IA) from farm broadcasting to real estate. KJJJC is now an affiliate of the Brownfield Network.

### *Farm Broadcasters Letter*



Office of Public Affairs  
Radio-TV Division  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Washington, D.C. 20250-1300

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**WETNESS**...has caused backups at grain elevators, says **Charles Lindy** (WILL, Urbana, IL). Elevators delayed taking new shipments during the afternoon as they attempted to dry corn already stored. The action caused delay for producers delivering grain.

**CORN HARVEST BEAT THE FROST**...says **John Weir** (KBUR, Burlington, IA). Dry, warm weather helped the corn mature. Storage is no problem in his area. John says foreign sales have helped to clean out some elevators. The apple crop is late. John says a little frost doesn't harm apples, and can add to the sugar content.

**NAFB**...48th annual convention is Nov. 11-15 at the Westin Crown Center, Kansas City, MO. NAFB president-elect **Ken Tanner** (WRAL-TV/Tobacco Radio Network, Raleigh, NC) says this year's theme is "Professionals First." **Orion Samuelson** (WGN Radio/Tribune Radio Network, Chicago) will head a panel on understanding futures trading. I hope to see you at NAFB.

*Vic Powell*  
VIC POWELL

Chief, Radio and TV Division